

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend Claims 1-11, 15, and 21 as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) An etch mask on a material to be etched comprising:

~~an elongated portion~~ a mesa stripe, wherein the width of said ~~elongated portion~~ mesa stripe is measured substantially perpendicular to ~~the~~ a lengthwise direction of ~~elongation~~ said mesa stripe; and

an end member connected to said ~~elongated portion~~ mesa stripe, where the width of said ~~elongated portion~~ mesa stripe adjacent to said end member is an end width, where said end member has a maximum extent measured in ~~the~~ a widthwise direction of said end width, and where said maximum extent of said end member is greater than said end width.

2. (Currently Amended) The mask ~~pattern~~ of Claim 1, wherein said end member is a first end member and further including

a second end member on a material to be etched and connected to said ~~elongated portion~~ mesa stripe, where the width of said ~~elongated portion~~ mesa stripe adjacent to said second end member is a second end width, where said second end member has a maximum extent measured in the widthwise direction of said second end width, and where said maximum extent of said second member is greater than said second end width.

3. (Currently Amended) The mask ~~pattern~~ of Claim 1, wherein said ~~elongated portion~~ mesa stripe is a first elongated portion, and further including

a second elongated portion on a material to be etched and connected to said end member, where the width of said second elongated portion is measured substantially perpendicular to the lengthwise direction of ~~elongation~~ said mesa stripe, where the width of

said second ~~elongated portion~~ mesa stripe adjacent to said end member is a second end width, and

where said maximum extent of said end member is greater than said second end width.

4. (Currently Amended) The mask ~~pattern~~ of Claim 1, wherein said maximum extent of said end member is at least twice than said end width.

5. (Currently Amended) The mask ~~pattern~~ of Claim 1, wherein said end member is adjacent to the edge of the material.

6. (Currently Amended) The mask ~~pattern~~ of Claim 1, wherein said first end member has an end member length measured perpendicular to said end width, and wherein said end member covers an area on the material to be etched that is greater than ~~the~~ a product of said end width and said end member length.

7. (Currently Amended) The mask ~~pattern~~ of Claim 1, wherein said end member describes a shape on the material to be etch, and wherein said shape is a circle, a square, or a zigzag.

8. (Currently Amended) The mask ~~pattern~~ of Claim 7, wherein said shape is a zigzap, where said zigzap has a total elongated length, and where the total elongated length of said zigzag is at least twice said end width.

9. (Currently Amended) The mask ~~pattern~~ of Claim 1, wherein said material to be etched with said etch mask includes a semiconductor material or an insulating material.

10. (Currently Amended) The mask ~~pattern~~ of Claim 1, wherein said etch mask is silicon nitride, silicon oxide, silicon oxynitride, or photo-sensitive resist.

11. (Currently Amended) The mask ~~pattern~~ of Claim 2, wherein said elongated portion is a rectangular portion extending from said first end to said second end.

12. (Original) An etch mask comprising a plurality of mask patterns as in Claim 2, wherein each of said directions of elongation are substantially parallel.

13. (Original) The etch mask Claim 12, wherein said etch mask is a stripe-shaped etch mask or a diffraction grating-shaped etch mask.

14. (Original) The etch mask of Claim 12, wherein at least one of said plurality of said first and second end members are adjacent to an edge of said material.

15. (Currently Amended) A mask pattern comprising:

a plurality of portions on a material to be etched, said plurality of portions including two end portions, and

~~an elongated portion~~ a mesa stripe disposed between said two end portions, where ~~the~~ a width of said ~~elongated portion~~ mesa stripe is measured substantially perpendicular to ~~the~~ a lengthwise direction of ~~elongation~~ the mesa stripe, where in the vicinity of said two end portions, said ~~elongated portion~~ mesa stripe has an end width, said end portion has a maximum extent measured in ~~the~~ a widthwise direction of said end width, and where said maximum extent is greater than said end width.

16. (Original) The mask pattern of Claim 15, wherein said maximum extent is at least twice than said end width.

17. (Original) The mask pattern of Claim 15, wherein at least one of said two end members is adjacent to the edge of the material.

18. (Original) The mask pattern of Claim 15, wherein said end portion has an end member length measured perpendicular to said end width, and wherein said end member covers an area on the material to be etched that is greater than the product of said end width and said end member length.

19. (Original) The mask pattern of Claim 15, wherein said end member describes a shape on the material to be etch, and where said shape is a circle, a square, or a zigzag.

20. (Original) The mask pattern of Claim 19, wherein said shape is a zigzag, where said zigzag has a total elongated length, and where the total elongated length of said zigzag is at least twice said end width.

21. (Currently Amended) The mask pattern of Claim 15, wherein said material to be etched with said etch mask includes a semiconductor material or an insulating material.

22. (Original) The mask pattern of Claim 15, wherein said etch mask is silicon nitride, silicon oxide, silicon oxynitride, or photo-sensitive resist.

23. (Original) The mask pattern of Claim 16, wherein said elongated portion is a rectangular portion.

24. (Original) An etch mask comprising a plurality of mask patterns as in Claim 15, wherein each of said directions of elongation are substantially parallel.

25. (Original) The etch mask of Claim 24, wherein said etch mask is a stripe-shaped etch mask or a diffraction grating-shaped etch mask.

26. (Original) The etch mask of Claim 25, wherein each of the plurality of said two end portions are adjacent to an edge of said material.